

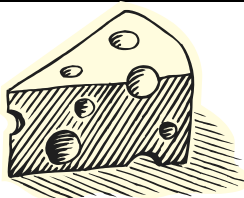


SOUTHEASTERN FISHERIES ASSOCIATION

H O T L I N E S

JANUARY 2006

Happy New Year to one and all. 2006 is going to be a banner year for the seafood industry. We have



stood against all the natural and anthropogenic tribulations of 2005 and its time to move on. Everyone ought to read, "WHO MOVED MY CHEESE", because the cheese has definitely been moved. If you stay in the same part of the maze you have always been in, the results will be the same. If you search for new cheese the rewards will be commensurate with the efforts of your search. Let's get it on.

SAUDI'S HELP ALABAMA SHRIMPERS

In an unprecedented charitable action, the government of Saudi Arabia donated vouchers for fuel worth \$1.2 million dollars. The 244 Alabama shrimpers who were unloading shrimp at local fish houses during the three months prior to Hurricane Katrina will

be the beneficiaries of this very generous gift. Congratulations to Governor Riley and the shrimp folks who worked on this for the shrimpers in Alabama.

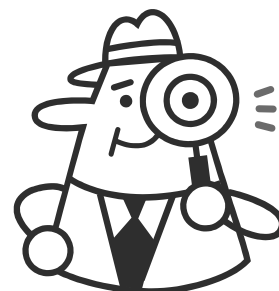
CONGRESS REPEALS THE BYRD AMENDMENT

In one of those late night, cigar filled backroom scenarios you read about all the time in the press, the House/Senate Conference Committees repealed the Byrd Amendment as part of a deal even though the Senate had voted overwhelmingly (72-19) not to repeal it. The managers did add a 2-year caveat allows the tariffs to accrue until July 2007 and portions of these tariffs will be paid out to individual shrimpers and companies certified in the government action establishing the tariffs in the first place.

After the 2007 date, the tariffs will still be collected but the monies will be deposited in the US Treasury. The shrimpers' actions to get the tariffs through 2 federal agencies were transparent from the beginning to the end with opponents and proponents included in all government action. It's too bad the repeal wasn't transparent and done in the sunshine for all to see. The vote was so close 50/50 that VP Cheney had to be brought back from a trip overseas to cast the deciding vote.

HACCP CLASSES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

More and more seafood companies are certifying additional personnel under the HACCP regulations. HACCP is more than just another government requirement; it is a protocol that will, if followed properly, assure a safe and high quality seafood product from



the "Boat to the throat" or as some like to say, from the "Water to the waiter". Food inspections are becoming more and more sophisticated and the agencies expect every company in the wholesale seafood business to be in full compliance. SFA has developed new documents for the industry including how to prevent Listeria. Every company that identifies itself as progressive and compliant with all regulations should consider certifying additional employees. Just give SFA a call at 850/224-0612 or e-mail Bob-fish@aol.com.

This newsletter is published by Southeastern Fisheries Association. Please pass it along and encourage others to be added to our mailing list.

If you want to be removed from the list, please contact us.

SFA is a non-profit association founded in 1952, charged with maintaining a viable seafood industry in the Southeast.

Robert P. Jones, Editor

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SHRIMP/SNAPPER SCOPING MEETINGS SCHEDULED

Scoping meetings have been set to discuss: Joint Reef Fish Amendment 27/Shrimp14 and Joint Reef Fish Amendment 28/Shrimp 15. The thrust of these two new amendments will have significant negative impact on the reef fish and shrimp industries. There will be a meeting on January 30th at the Tampa Westshore Hotel, Westshore Blvd. beginning at 7:00 PM and one in Key West at the Doubletree Grand located at 3990 Roosevelt Blvd. in Key West which also begins at 7:00 PM. The Council is said to be interested in hearing from the fishermen and dealers, although not much weight will be given to their testimony in the opinion of many fishermen and processors.

GULF COUNCIL TO MEET IN TEXAS TO DISCUSS GROUPEL ET AL.

The Gulf Council staff will present a status report on the grouper allocation amendment to the Reef Fish and Shrimp Committees. There are efforts underway to take the consumers portion of the grouper allocation and give it to the anglers in the Gulf of Mexico. The Committee will also discuss a procedure to trigger vertical line fishing only in the grouper fishery that has been proposed by the Gulf Fishermen's Association (GFA), will also be discussed at the January 9, 2006 Council Meeting in Corpus Christi, Texas.

Tuesday's agenda (January 10th) includes a meeting of the Joint Reef Fish/Shrimp Management Committee, which will evaluate scoping documents for Reef Fish Amendment 27/Shrimp Amendment 14 and Reef Fish 28/Shrimp 15.

Joint Reef Fish Amendment 27/Shrimp Amendment 14 proposes actions that deal with adjustments to the total allowable catch (TAC) for red snapper,

SFA'S ANNUAL 50/50 RAFFLE SET TO BEGIN

SFA will be distributing tickets in the mail for the drawing at the annual meeting, which will be held in Key Largo this June. (Much more on this later)



\$8,000 was distributed to members last year from the sale of \$16,000 worth of tickets. Let's sell all 200 tickets this year and award \$10,000 to three winners at our convention.

If you don't receive a ticket and brochure by mail and are interested in purchasing a drawing ticket just call the office 850.224.0612 or fax a request to 850.222.3663 and we will mail you a ticket.



size limits, bag limits, recreational season dates, and the certification of new shrimp bycatch reduction devices (BRDs). The amendment will also look at shrimp limits on trawling gear, shrimp restrictions on the transfer of vessel permits, and possible area closures for shrimp.

SEAFOOD RESTAURANT ALLIANCE TAKES STAND

Members of the Seafood Restaurant Alliance as well as prominent elderly citizens have unanimously endorsed a Petition to the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Florida Fish & Wildlife Commission opposing any reallocation of seafood products, especially red grouper, which reduces seafood for the consumers (commercial fishermen) in favor of recreational anglers. Thousands of restaurants rely on receiving a fair portion of the allowable harvest of marine resources and oppose any publicly owned seafood resource being reserved for the private use and enjoyment of recreational anglers.

Seafood is good for the heart, supplies needed nutrients and is important in reducing a host of diseases in the eld-

erly including Alzheimer's disease. To deny non-boaters their share of the fish is unconscionable. As a special service to the restaurants in the alliance, SFA has developed a HACCP program that will assist them not only in handling seafood better, but make them aware of product substitution, short weight and poor quality. SFA's program stresses the dangers of buying seafood through the backdoor from fishermen who poach and then get tax free dollars at the expense of the taxpaying citizens of the state. It is against state and federal law to buy seafood through the backdoor of restaurants or any source from non-licensed fishermen or dealers.

ANGLERS CAUGHT POACHING GROUPEL GET LIGHT FINE

An illegal catch was made aboard the 36-foot Contender "Digestible," operated by Mark Wicker, 40, of Fort Myers Beach. During a standard fisheries inspection at the Carl Johnson Boat Ramp in Lovers Key, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) officers, acting on a tip, discovered 59 grouper, which is 34 over the bag limit, and 21 red snapper (red snapper was closed).

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The anglers said they caught the fish about 100 miles southwest of Estero Island near the Florida Keys. On Dec. 10 at almost midnight FWC officers arrested:

- ◆ Corey Hickson, 36, of 1324 SE Sixth Ave., Cape Coral
- ◆ Stephen Grimes, 41, 401 Donora Blvd., Ft. Myers Beach
- ◆ Sean McQuade, 36, 1829 SW 49th Lane, Cape Coral
- ◆ Mark Wicker 40, 211 Sterling Ave., Ft. Myers Beach
- ◆ Rhonda Wicker 40, 211 Sterling Ave., Ft. Myers Beach



All of the charges are second-degree misdemeanors punishable by

up to 60 days in jail and/or a \$500 fine. The poachers got their bag limit back. The defendants are scheduled to appear in Lee County Court Dec. 29. According to people in the know and who work on the waterfront, there are at least 200 or more poachers landing fish every 24 hours in this area but they are difficult to catch. If you have any information, call the FWC and report the poachers. **KUDOS TO THE FWC OFFICERS FOR DOING THEIR JOB.**

FLORIDA FISHERMAN ISSUED \$17,500 PENALTY FOR UNDERSIZED SWORDFISH, ILLEGAL GEAR

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Office of General Counsel for Enforcement & Litigation has issued the owner/operator of the fishing vessel (FV) *Sea Hunter* a \$17,500 Notice of Violation and Assessment (NOVA)

Southeastern Fisheries Association will customize your company's HACCP Plan!
 FDA trained consultant with over 40 years experience in all levels of the seafood industry.

Call today:
850/224-3180
 or fax an inquiry to
850/222-FOOD



and a 45 day Notice of Permit Sanction (NOPS).

The owner/operator was the subject of a joint investigation conducted by NOAA Fisheries Service's Office for Law Enforcement (OLE), the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, and the U.S. Coast Guard for allegedly possessing undersized swordfish, fishing without the required permit, fishing with improper gear, and failure to report landings. The seized catch was valued at \$827.00 and is subject to forfeiture.

The crew of the *Sea Hunter* allegedly connected individual hand line buoys together to form a longline. While hand line gear, consisting of a maximum of two leaders with hooks, is permitted by regulations, pelagic longline gear is prohibited along the East Coast of Florida.

STILL NO FINANCIAL AID FOR THE COMMERCIAL FISHING INDUSTRY

The commercial fishing industry always falls through the cracks in the time



of a natural disaster like hurricanes. We are regulated by NMFS/NOAA and state agencies but they have no infrastructure established to offer assistance. There will be a meeting sometime this month in Florida to discuss options for assistance in the future. Hurricanes will continue to come to the Gulf and South Atlantic and no matter how prepared the industry is to survive the wind and rain; there will be damage to gear, vessels, and shoreside facilities and there will be down time while the fishermen wait at port to return to the ocean. Surely there must be some federal agency capable of providing assistance to an important food producing industry. Who will it be?

NOAA FISHERIES OFFICIALS TO MEET WITH INDUSTRY IN KEY WEST

Ralph Boragine, Executive Director of Monroe County Commercial Fishermen's Association has made arrangements for Dr. Bill Hogarth, head of NOAA Fisheries, to meet with fishermen who were damaged by all the hurricanes in 2005. The purpose of the meeting is to see what kind of pro-

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We invite anyone receiving this newsletter, who is not already a member of SFA to join us and become an activist for your business. We are here to respond to your business needs in the state capital and around the Southeast Region. We can help you only if we know you and correspond with you regularly.....We would look forward to serving you and your company!

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grams can be developed to help fishermen during natural disasters, At this point in time there is no help available to fishermen in the Gulf of Mexico for the damage suffered.

SFA President Tom Hill and Keys Director Gary Graves will serve on the panel representing Southeastern Fisheries Associations and the shore-side facilities that also fall through the cracks just like the fishermen. Senators Nelson and Martinez as well as Congressman Lehtinen tried to get some needed relief in the recent appropriations bill but the \$60 million proposed was cut from the budget. Regional help is often looked at by other regions as pork. Several old-timers quipped, "If two or three hurricanes like Katrina hit Alaska there would be a hurricane relief bill for fishermen put into the budget in a matter of hours."

UPGRADE YOUR SFA MEMBERSHIP

Retail and HACCP members are urged to upgrade their membership in SFA to either to Associate members status but preferably to Corporate Member status. Notify the SFA office for financial methods to accomplish this upgrade. Thanks.



Goal for 2006 — 2007...

Each member sign up a **NEW** member this year!

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